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LETTER DATED 3 JUNE 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LEBANON TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The letter dated 29 May 1992 from the Israeli representative (document S/24032), in which he expressed a wish to point out so-called "salient facts" about the situation prevailing in southern Lebanon, demonstrated Israel's consistent policy of misleading public opinion with respect to the nature of the 14-year-long Israeli occupation of a large part of southern Lebanon, its justification of the killings and acts of destruction carried out by Israeli forces against Lebanese civilians and their property and its constant violation of Lebanese sovereignty in a manner incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and international laws and conventions.

The letter implies that Israel is engaged in legitimate self-defence and the defence of Israeli civilians: this could not be further from the truth.

It is the citizens of southern Lebanon who suffer every day from raids by the Israeli air force, from the intensive artillery bombardment of their villages and houses, from the demolitions of their homes and schools carried out by the Israeli forces and their associates and from the widespread expulsion of the population from areas adjacent to the territories occupied by Israel. All these measures are designed to protect and preserve the occupation.

The limited acts of resistance carried out by Lebanese nationals inside Lebanese territory simply represent the natural exercise of a legitimate right established in the Charter and international treaties and are directed only against the military presence of the Israeli occupation.

Israeli officials have the audacity to call upon the Lebanese Government to protect their occupation of Lebanese territory despite the fact that the Israeli Government has made no indication of its intention to terminate that occupation in accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

In his letter, the Israeli representative accuses the Lebanese Government of not fulfilling its international obligations, although Lebanon has and continues to be a victim of Israeli aggression and repeated invasion of its territory. Lebanon is one of the founder Members of the United Nations and has always operated in conformity with its Charter. Israel, meanwhile, was accepted as a Member of the international Organization on the basis of conditions which it has failed to fulfil at any time in its history. As a State, it has been subject to constant condemnation in the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and other organizations. Israel's current occupation of Lebanese territory is a flagrant example of its defiance of international will as expressed in resolution 425 (1978).

The letter also portrays Israel as being the party committed to the ongoing peace process. This claim has repeatedly been disproved in the light of Israel's acts of military escalation against Lebanon on the eve of each round of bilateral negotiations and of its constant policy of creating crises in order to prevent normalization of the situation in Lebanon. Its policy thus impedes the peace process in the Middle East as a whole.

The extraordinary and tragic situation of Lebanese living in the south of their country will inevitably be resolved if Israel implements Security Council resolution 425 (1978). This would allow the Lebanese Government to extend its sovereignty to all its territory and to impose the rule of law in such a way as to restore security and peace in the region after a long period of bloody and futile conflict.

The situation in southern Lebanon provides an opportunity to test the sincerity of professed intentions to ensure the success of the Middle East peace process, this being the least complicated aspect provided there is a genuine desire to build confidence between the parties. The first practical step would be for Israel to halt its bloody and destructive war against Lebanese nationals and to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978), now that the years have demonstrated the futility of its policy and the negative consequences for the future of the region and its population.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Khalil MAKKAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative